tinned "Pak's bid to convince Russia" appeared in the Hindustran Times dated 20th July, 1994 about the changing stand taken by Russia on the Kashmir issue;

(b) whether it is a fact that during the recent visit of our Prime Minister to Russia Kashmir issue was discussed; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Russia on the Kashmir issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) to (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Russian Government has reiterated that it stand remains unchanged, which is that the issue should be resolved through peaceful bileteral negotiations between India and Pakistan within the framework provided by the Simla Agreement of 1972. The Russian Government is against the internationalisation of the Kashmir issue.

Joint Sccrcatry level talks with Pakistan

2868. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has recently revived the proposal for Joint Secretary level talks with Pakistan to review the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Diplomatic Personnel agreed upon by the two sides in August 1992;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the response of the Pakistan Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) to (c) Government proposed on April 7, 1994 to the Government of Pakistan that consultations between the two Foreign Offices at the level of Joint Secretary may be held for a review of the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel in India and Pakistan. In the light of numerous incidents of intimidatorjr surveillance and harassment meted out to the Indian diplomatic officials and their family members posted in our missions in Pakistan. On July 12, 1994 Government reiterated its earlier proposal to hold discussions between the two Foreign Offices to review the implementation of the Code of Conduct. This proposal has not yet found favour with Islamabad. Meanwhile, discussions were recently held in New Delhi and in Islamabad between officials of the concerned Mission and Ministry to discuss the range of issues involved. Several suggestions were made on ways and means of improving implementation of the Code of Conduct in letter and spirit. Both sides also agreed to hold further discussion on this subject.

Offers on UNOSOM-H

2869. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the offices of Chief of Staff UNOSOM-II (Somalia) and UN Force Commander, Cyprus came our way;

(b) whether Government let go the two offers; and

(c) if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) to (c) The UN had offered to India, the post of Force Commander of the United Nations force in Cyprus. Although India has provided a panel of three suitable officers-from the Indian Army, it now appear that an Indian candidate for this post will not enjoy consensus support from the parties involved. Hence India is not pressing for this appointment.

The post of Chief of Staff in the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM-II) had also been offered to India, after June'94. However, since the present mandate of, UNOSOM-II is only till September 1994 and the operation is expected to end by March'95. the UN is now of the view that

no major readjustment of the force structure should be made. However, it may be noted that India currently holds the position of the Chief of Operations, which is another key post in the UNOSOM-I1.

Indian Mission Vehicle Stoned In Pakistan

2870. SHRIMATI VYJAYANTIMALA BALI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news items which appeared in The Times of India on 22nd July, 1994 thai Indian Mission Cars had been stoned recently in Pakistan;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard;

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to prevent .recurrence of this kind; and

(d) whether as a result thereof is any uncertainty about a meeting for the code of conduct for diplomats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Government are gravely concerned over the incidents of vandalism of vehicles belonging to our missions in Pakistan in the recent period. Government regard this to be a gross violation by Pakistan of accepted norms of diplomatic behaviour as well as of the mutual commitments and obligations under the Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel in India and Pakistan. Government have conveyed to the Government of Pakistan its deep regret and disappointment over this matter. Government have also taken up these incidents of breach of the bilateral Code of Conduct on a case-by-case basis with the Pakistan authorities.

Discussion were recently held in New Delhi and Islamabad between officials of the concerned Mission and Ministry to discuss the range of issues involved. Several suggestions were made of ways and means of improving implementation of the Code of Conduct in letter and spirit. Both sides also agreed to hold further discussion on this subject.

During the SAARC Ministerial Meeting at Dhaka, on July 31, 1994, Minister of State for External Affiars, Shri R.L. Bhatia, took up this matter with the Pakistan Foreign Minister. It was agreed that the Code of Conduct should be implemented in its entirely and to consider certain specific steps which would contribute towards this process.

Nagpur Passport Office

2871. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of passports issued by the passport office at Nagpur since its inception upto the 1st of August, 1994;

(b) what is the number of applications pending with the passport office Nagpur for the grant of passports on that date;

(c) whether it is a fact that no full time regular passport officer is being posted in this office;

(d) if so, the details about the names, designations and tenure of the passport officers who were posted there during the said period; and

(e) what steps are being taken to improve the efficiency of this office?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) The number of passports issued by the Passport Office, Nagpur upto 1st August, 1994 is 47,431.

(b) The number of applications pending for grant of passports till that period is 694.

(c) An officer of the rank of Superintendent is heading the Passport Office.